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ABSTRACT

Suggested accommodations for mainstreamed secondary learning disabled students on teacher made tests are presented. Suggestions are grouped into general; format; and test taking modifications (presentation, recording, and scoring). Among the many suggestions made are the following: watch readability of questions; assure test is clearly printed; provide tests on which to write rather than Scantron or answer sheets, present tests orally to students with reading problems; permit use of computational aids for mathematics exams; and consider alternatives to standard grading procedures. A chart is also included which compares classroom behaviors exhibited by students, their effect on test performance, and appropriate test accommodations. Classroom behaviors, test performance, and appropriate test accommodations are identified for each of the following categories: students with auditory problems, students with verbal expression problems, students with visual perception problems, students with written expression problems, students with fine motor problems, and students with organizational problems. (DB)

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Accommodations for Secondary Learning Disabled/Mainstreamed Students on Teacher-Made Tests

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Accommodations for Secondary Learning Disabled/Mainstreamed

Students on Teacher-Made Tests

General:

1. Provide students with instruction in test-taking skills. Teach strategies for answering objective and subjective test questions. Provide instruction in budgeting/scheduling time for each type of test question; skimming test before beginning work to assess length, type of test questions, point value; marking unknown questions and returning to those unanswered; identifying key works in test questions. Provide practice in answering each type of test question, especially essay.

2. Review material before tests. Highlight key ideas for students. Teach students to anticipate test questions--type and content. Encourage students to develop practice test questions and practice answering the practice questions.

3. Provide students with many tests (quizzes), rather than one comprehensive test. A comprehensive test can be developed using questions from all previous quizzes.

4. Watch readability of questions--are the questions themselves too difficult?; do the words used in the questions match those used during instruction? Assure the test is assessing what has been taught, not reading ability.

5. Review directions/format of test with all students prior to beginning administration. Assure learning disabled students understand the directions, sections of test, responses required.

Format:

1. Assure test is clearly printed--xeroxing is preferable to ditto; typewritten is preferable to handwritten.

2. Assure test is visually uncluttered. Assure there is sufficient space between items (triple space is suggested) and between lines of items (1½ spaces is suggested).

3. Monitor the number of items on a page as well as margins. Margins should be at least 1½" on all sides. Strive for symmetrical spacing. For multiple choice, align distractors vertically, rather than horizontally, and type the stem and distractors on the same page. Permit students to circle the letter of the correct answer, rather than writing the letter of the correct answer in front of the question.

4. For fill in the blanks, short answer, and essay questions, provide sufficient space to write the answer. Students do not do well when answers carry over to the back of the page or onto the next page.

5. Provide tests on which to write rather than Scantron or answer sheets. The transference of answers from one page to another is often difficult.

6. Provide additional spacing between different types of test questions. Provide separate directions for each type of test question and a sample item, when needed.

7. If students have particular difficulties with certain types of test questions, consider the following modifications:

    a. For multiple choice questions, if 4-5 distractors are given for other students, eliminate 1-2 distractors. Students must then choose the correct answer from 3-4 distractors rather than from 4-5 distractors.
    b. For matching test questions, if there are 10-15 entries in Column A, preselect 3-4 choices from Column A for each item in Column B. Record the selected choices beside the item in Column B. Have the student select the correct answer from that item pool, rather than the 10-15 given in Column A. This modification assists slow readers and students with organizational problems
    c. For fill in the blanks test questions, change to multiple choice format--i.e., provide 3-4 choices for the blank. The student must select the correct answer from the 3-4 choices given. This modification changes the task from one of recall (memory) to recognition.
    d. For essay questions, review question/key words/task with student individually. Provide assistance in developing outline. Permit dictated or taped response when appropriate.

8. Consider color coding, underlining, enlarging, or highlighting key words and mathematical symbols.

9. Provide marker to students needing visual organization.

Test-Taking Modifications: Presentation, Recording, and Scoring

1. Present tests orally to students with reading problems. Similarly, permit students to tape or dictate answers, use typewriter or word processor, peer, volunteer, parent, instructional assistant, special education personnel for test administration, proctoring, or recording.

2. Permit students to take test in quiet place--e.g., carrel, media center, office, special education department, with or without an instructional assistant.

3. Inform students of allotted time prior to beginning test; permit students as much time as needed; provide "time remaining" periodically.

4. Permit use of computational aids for math exams.

5. Consider the following alternatives to standard grading procedures:

    a. Give fewer problems--e.g., every other problem or asterisked questions only
    b. Grade on a curve--i.e., allow a lower percentage correct for a specified grade
    c. Score correct vs. tried, instead of total number correct on entire test
    d. Give partial credit where warranted instead of item totally incorrect

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Accommodations for Learning Disabled/Mainstreamed Students with Auditory Problems on Teacher-Made Tests

Classroom Behaviors Exhibited by Students	Effect on Test Performance	Test Accommodations
- Has difficult distinguishing fine differences between sounds and words--e.g., d-t, pin-pen - Displays poor receptive vocabulary--i.e., does not understand directions, task, or questions - Has difficulty following a series of oral directions - May watch the speaker's face intently or lean forward toward speaker - Repeats (reauditorializes) what is told before acting or responding - Often repeats the same question - Asks questions about oral directions and facts previously given - May have difficulty remembering what is heard - Cannot accurately record notes from oral presentations - Becomes annoyed by extraneous noise	- Difficulty processing oral directions and questions accurately - Difficulty responding to orally posed teacher questions - Difficulty completing orally administered tests within the same time frame as the rest of the class - Difficulty concentrating on test - Difficulty screening out or ignoring environmental noise	- Repeat directions several times for students - Segment test into sections; provide directions for each section - Have student repeat directions, questions to teacher, instructional assistant to assure comprehension - Provide student with seat close to teacher; assist him in watching teacher's face for directions - Provide written, with oral, directions - Provide carrel or other area (empty classroom, office, library) for testing where noise can be minimized - Permit student ample time for oral responses

Accommodations for Learning Disabled/Mainstreamed Students with Verbal Expression Problems on Teacher-Made Tests

Classroom Behaviors Exhibited by Students	Effect on Test Performance	Test Accommodations
- Displays poor speech, e.g., articulation, fluency, expressiveness - Uses slang or colloquial terms - Uses grammatically incorrect sentences - Remarks, when made, are often irrelevant, confusing, or inaccurate - Written vocabulary is much stronger than spoken vocabulary - Has difficulty explaining self clearly and coherently - Is unable to vocalize thoughts rapidly - Is reluctant to volunteer ideas or respond verbally to questions - Appears uncomfortable speaking in a group - Has difficulty recalling a word he wants to use - Does not enjoy discussions, presentations, or reading aloud	- Difficulty answering oral questions quickly and articulately - Difficulty answering questions of teacher posed to clarify misunderstandings - Difficulty taking oral examinations	- Provide student with with written, not oral assessments - When student speaks, paraphrase or summarize questions and responses into complete thoughts - Teach student to rely on notes or outline he prepares and rehearse his his responses - If oral responses are required, permit student to tape his presentation. Permit him to practice before small group, volunteer, instructional assistant prior to class - Provide student with peer, if possible, for support when word retrieval difficulties occur - Provde verbal or visual prompts to student to aid word retrieval - Provide student sufficient time to respond

Accomodations for Learning Disabled/Mainstreamed Students with Visual Perception Problems Teacher-Made Tests

Classroom Behaviors Exhibited by Students	Effect on Test Performance	Test Accomodations
- Has trouble discriminating similar shapes, letters, words - Shows signs of eye strain, e.g, squinting, blinking, holding head close to page - Does not notice details in pictures, photographs, maps - Does not enjoy pictures, books movies, filmstrips, slides, - Has trouble following written directions from board or printed page - Frequently loses place when reading or copying - Skips words or reverses words when reading aloud - May use fingers to keep place when reading - Has difficulty reading and copying accurately from blackboard - Displays poor sight vocabulary - Works slowly on printed assignments or tests - Demonstrates erratic spelling or incorrect letter sequences - Confused by worksheets containing much visual stimuli - May whisper to self while working with visual material - Has difficulty remembering what has been seen	- Difficulty reading the test question - Difficulty reading poorly copied or handwritten tests - Difficulty taking a test that is visually crowded - Difficulty keeping his place when using a separate answer sheet - Difficulty understanding lengthy written directions - Difficulty accurately copying test questions from the chalkboard - Difficulty completing test within same time as other students due to difficulties reading and processing test questions	- Provide clean, clear copy of test to student - Assure test is visually uncluttered & spacing ample--, i.e., triple space between questions and 1 1/2 spaces between lines - Provide student with marker, if needed - Provide separate directions for each section of test - Provide oral testing when necessary - Provide student with assistance in reading test questions - Provide student with volunteer, instructional assistant to record dictated responses - Permit student to tape record answer, or to use typewriter or word processor - Provide student ample time to take test

Accommodations for Learning Disabled/Mainstreamed Students with Written Expression Problems on Teacher-Made Tests

Classroom Behaviors Exhibited by Students	Effect on Test Performance	Test Accommodations
- Has trouble writing a sentence with a complete thought - Frequently does not complete written assignments or tests - Demonstrates poor spelling skills - Written ideas and concepts are usually stronger than writing mechanics--e.g., spelling, syntax - Spoken vocabulary is stronger than written vocabulary - Has difficulty writing answers on paper, but may be able to give correct answers orally - Handwritten work may appear sloppy and disorganized - Handwriting may appear to be laborious and painful - Tests better on objective tests than tests requiring writing--e.g., short answer, essay	- Difficulty writing answers in sentence or paragraph form for short answer or essay questions - Difficulty using the mechanics of language correctly--i.e., spelling, grammar, capitalization, punctuation - Difficulty completing short answer or essay questions during time limits	- Provide student with alternative testing means--e.g., oral, taped, or dictated responses - Provide objective type test questions when possible--i.e., multiple choice, matching, true-false, fill in the blanks - Permit student to use outlines, diagrams, charts, tables, webs to present content rather than complete sentences - Permit sufficient time to student to write. Permit manuscript or cursive. - Permit student to use typewriter or word processor - Permit student to write on test - Grade content not mechanics of written work - Ask student for clarification of written responses - Provide assistance with spelling

Accommodations for Learning Disabled/Mainstreamed Students with Fine Motor Problems on Teacher-Made Tests

Classroom Behaviors Exhibited by Students	Effect on Test Performance	Test Accommodations
- Displays poor handwriting, including difficulty forming letters and numbers - Displays poor copying skills - Shows fatigue and restlessness during writing tasks - Handwritten work often appears sloppy and disorganized - Handwriting appears laborious and painful - Usually works slowly in completing written work	- Difficulty writing answers to short answer and essay questions - Difficulty copying test questions from chalkboard - Difficulty shading in spaces on answer sheets - Difficulty filling in the blanks with correct word(s) if the space allotted is too short	- Provide oral testing when possible - Provide students with objective type test questions--i.e., true-false, matching, multiple choice - Provide student with test on which to record answers rather than answer sheet. If answer sheet is required, provide marker to assist student maintain place. - Provide adequate space for answers to fill in the blanks questions - Provide students with short answer questions rather than essay questions--i.e., questions which begin with list, name, identfy

Accommodations for Learning Disabled/Mainstreamed Students
with Fine Motor Problems on Teacher-Made Tests

Classroom Behaviors Exhibited by Students	Effect on Test Performance	Test Accommodations
		- If essay test is required, provide assistance with making outline prior to writing - Permit students to dictate answers to peer, volunteer, instructional assistant - Provide student with ample time to answer questions

Accommodations for Learning Disabled/Mainstreamed Students with Organizational Problems on Teacher-Made Tests

Classroom Behaviors Exhibited by Students	Effect on Test Performance	Test Accommodations
- Demonstrates poor organization of work on paper - Has difficulty getting started on assigned activities - Has trouble making choices and and identifying priorities - Has difficulty distinguishing main ideas from details - Has trouble developing an outline - Loses track of time, tends to get disoriented when changing activities - Always seems to be doing things at the last minute - Frequently misplaces books, pencils, homework, etc. - Frequently forgets schedules, assignments, directions - Has a messy desk, locker, notebook - Has difficulty adjusting to changes in routine - Is easily distracted by extraneous stimuli and is often off task	- Difficulty with beginning a test - Difficulty developing a systematic plan or strategy for taking a test as a whole - Difficulty with multiple choice and matching questions because making a choice is difficult - Difficulty following lengthy written or oral directions - Difficulty completing tests with several format changes - Difficulty completing a test on time - Difficulty screening out environmental noises which cause distraction - Difficulty staying on task	- Provide student with checklist for needed items--e.g., 2 pencils, pen, paper - Help student begin--i.e., have him tell you his plan for completion - Administer test in a small group or individually - Make sure test format is consistent with previous instruction - Make the test visually clear and uncluttered - Triple space between test items and 1 1/2 spaces between lines of each item - Provide objective test items--avoid short answer and essay - Help student monitor time--give time remaining periodically

Accommodations for Learning Disabled/Mainstreamed Students
with Organizational Problems on Teacher-Made Tests

Classroom Behaviors Exhibited by Students	Effect on Test Performance	Test Accommodations
		- Provide fewer distractors for multiple choice items--e.g., if student have 4 choices, eliminate 1 choice for LD students so he needs to choose between 3, not 4 choices - Provide fewer choices on matching items--e.g., give students 3-4 choices from Column B to choose, not the whole list - Provide written directions for each type of test item - Avoid essay--use short answer, fill in the blanks - If essay questions are required, accept an outline, dictated answer, taped answer - Provide marker to student to aid in keeping place

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